

SUMMARY

S.1 PROJECT LOCATION

The section of State Trunk Highway (STH) 26 evaluated in this document is located in south central Wisconsin in Rock, Jefferson, and Dodge Counties. The project begins on the north side of Janesville at IH 90 and extends north about 48 miles (77 km) to approximately 9 miles (15 km) north of Watertown at STH 60-East (Figure S.1). Within the project limits, STH 26 passes through the City of Milton, City of Jefferson, Village of Johnson Creek, City of Watertown, and bypasses the City of Fort Atkinson. In the rural areas, STH 26 passes through the Towns of Harmony, Milton, Koshkonong, Jefferson, Aztalan, Farmington, Watertown, Emmet, and Clyman.

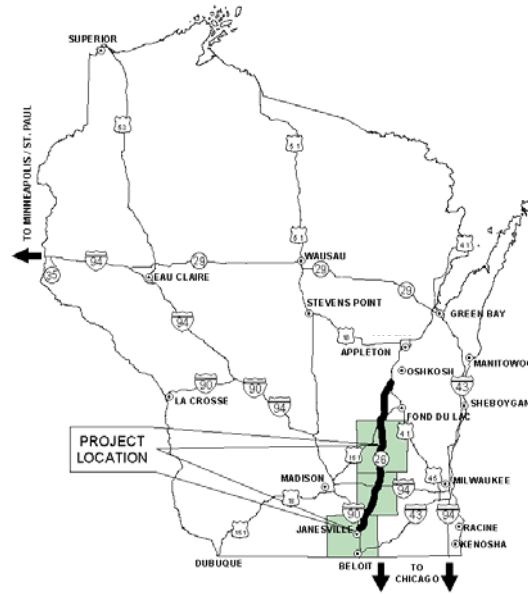


Figure S.1 Project Location

S.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The south project terminus is at the STH 26 intersection with IH 90, a major highway with substantial traffic volumes. The north project terminus is north of Watertown on STH 26 at STH 60 East. At this point, STH 26 connects with a significant east-west highway, and traffic volumes north of this intersection decrease substantially. STH 16 runs concurrent with STH 26 from north of Watertown to STH 60 West, and STH 60 runs concurrent with STH 26 for 1.0 miles (1.6 km) between STH 60 West and STH 60 East, thus adding to the traffic volumes in these sections. The segment of STH 26 between IH 90 and STH 60 East is of sufficient length to address environmental matters on a broad scope, has independent utility, and does not require or preclude development of the remaining section or future options. Therefore, both IH 90 and STH 60 East are logical project termini.

The proposed improvement was presented to the State Transportation Projects Commission (TPC) for consideration as a major project in the fall of 2000, and it has been approved for funding. It is anticipated that construction would not occur until at least 2008, with right-of-way acquisition starting in earlier years. Sections of STH 26 will likely be staged for improvement over a period of time, as funds become available.

S.3 PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of the project is to provide a safe and efficient transportation corridor having national, state, regional and local importance for STH 26 while minimizing adverse environmental disturbances. STH 26 accommodates the commodity transport of goods and services as a federal and/or state truck route, and provides communities along the corridor with access to local and regional services.

The following is a summary of the key factors influencing the need to improve STH 26 from IH 90 at Janesville to STH 60-East north of Watertown.

- **The corridor is of national, state, and regional importance.** It is included on the National Highway System (NHS), and is classified as a Principal Arterial. The highway is designated as a federal and/or state long-truck route, and is designated as a Connector route in WisDOT's *Corridors 2020* plan. The route links several communities in an area that has historically been an area of high population growth, and provides regional access to schools, health care, and shopping facilities. STH 26 provides the area with direct connection to I-90 and I-94.
- **The route is of local importance.** STH 26 is the major urban arterial in several communities serving both through and local traffic. Due to the high volume of through and truck traffic, the local function of this route is hindered, and the route acts as a barrier separating parts of those communities. If the route continues to be congested, then safety, mobility, and economic development will be adversely affected.
- **Traffic volumes are high and capacity and level of service (LOS) will decrease in the future.** Traffic volumes will increase approximately 85 to 200 percent by the design year 2028 resulting in volumes two to three times higher than the recommended threshold for a two-lane urban or rural roadway. If no action is taken, the LOS will degrade to LOS "E" or LOS "F" for sections being considered for improvements by the year 2028, which will likely result in traffic diversion to local systems and increased safety problems in the corridor and adjacent local road systems.
- **The corridor is a significant truck route.** STH 26 is the only continuous north-south designated long-truck route in Jefferson and Waukesha Counties. Existing truck volumes range from 1,360 vpd in Milton to 2,500 vpd in Jefferson, and account for approximately 11-18 percent of the average daily traffic (ADT). The high truck volumes, particularly in the downtown areas, disrupt traffic flow and increase hazards to traffic and pedestrians.
- **Crash rates are high along several segments of the existing facility.** The STH 26 corridor has a high number of access points, especially in urban areas, and consequently there are a number of segments with higher than average crash rates for the five-year period 1994 through 1998. It is likely that crash frequency will increase if no improvements are made to the existing roadway.

To satisfy project purpose and need requirements, any proposed improvement alternatives must:

- Provide a transportation system consistent with state planning efforts and the intended highway function as a route of national, state, regional and local importance.
- Provide capacity and an adequate level of service for current and projected traffic volumes including trucks.
- Reduce congestion and travel time.
- Improve the safety of the highway by reducing traffic conflicts and the potential for crashes.
- Provide relatively unimpeded traffic flow with an operating speed of 55-65 mph (89-105 km/h) in rural areas, and a substantial reduction in the number of existing access points in urban areas to maintain a minimum operating speed of 40 mph (65 km/h).
- Avoid or minimize adverse environmental disturbances, including impacts to wetlands and other natural resources, and cultural resources such as historical and archaeological features.

- Minimize impacts due to right-of-way acquisition and relocation.
- Support local community needs and interests, and be consistent with local development patterns.

S.4 ALTERNATIVES

S.4.1 General

A range of alternatives was developed for the STH 26 project corridor. Although the proposed solutions address the entire project corridor, alternatives were developed for each of the corridor's three study segments (Figure S.4): the south segment (Janesville to Fort Atkinson), the central segment (Ft. Atkinson to Johnson Creek), and the north segment (Johnson Creek to Watertown).

Each of these alternatives was evaluated for its ability to meet the purpose and need requirements of this project. In accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) guidelines, only those feasible and prudent alternatives that passed the screening process were selected for detailed evaluation in this EIS.

The study process consisted of a preliminary alternative development stage and a detailed study stage. A schematic overview of the process is shown in Table S.4.1. The preliminary stage identified a broad range of alternatives and identified those that met the purpose and need requirements for this project and merited further study. The detailed study stage was a thorough evaluation of those alternatives.

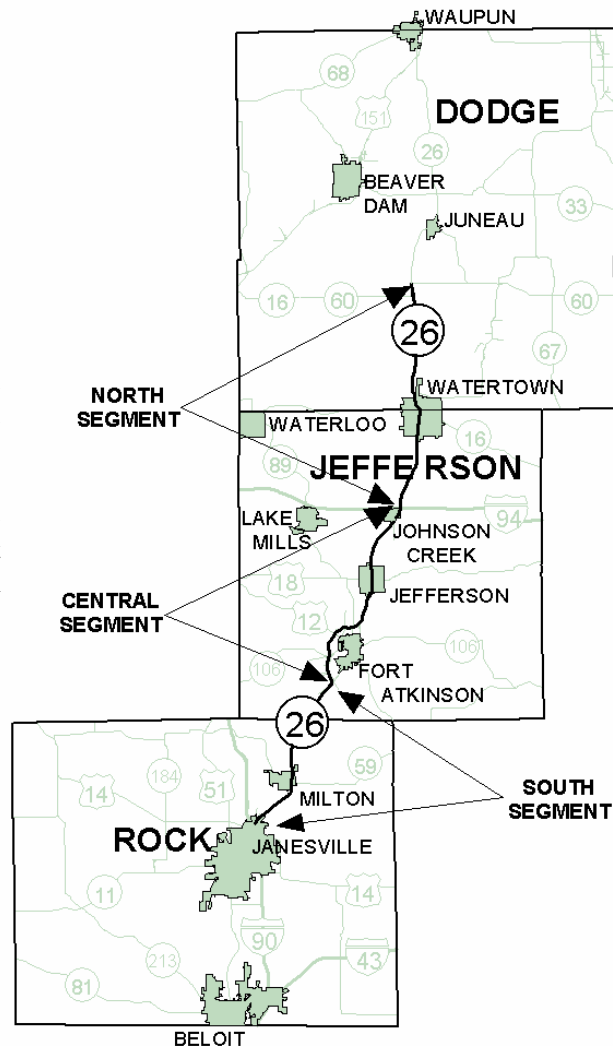
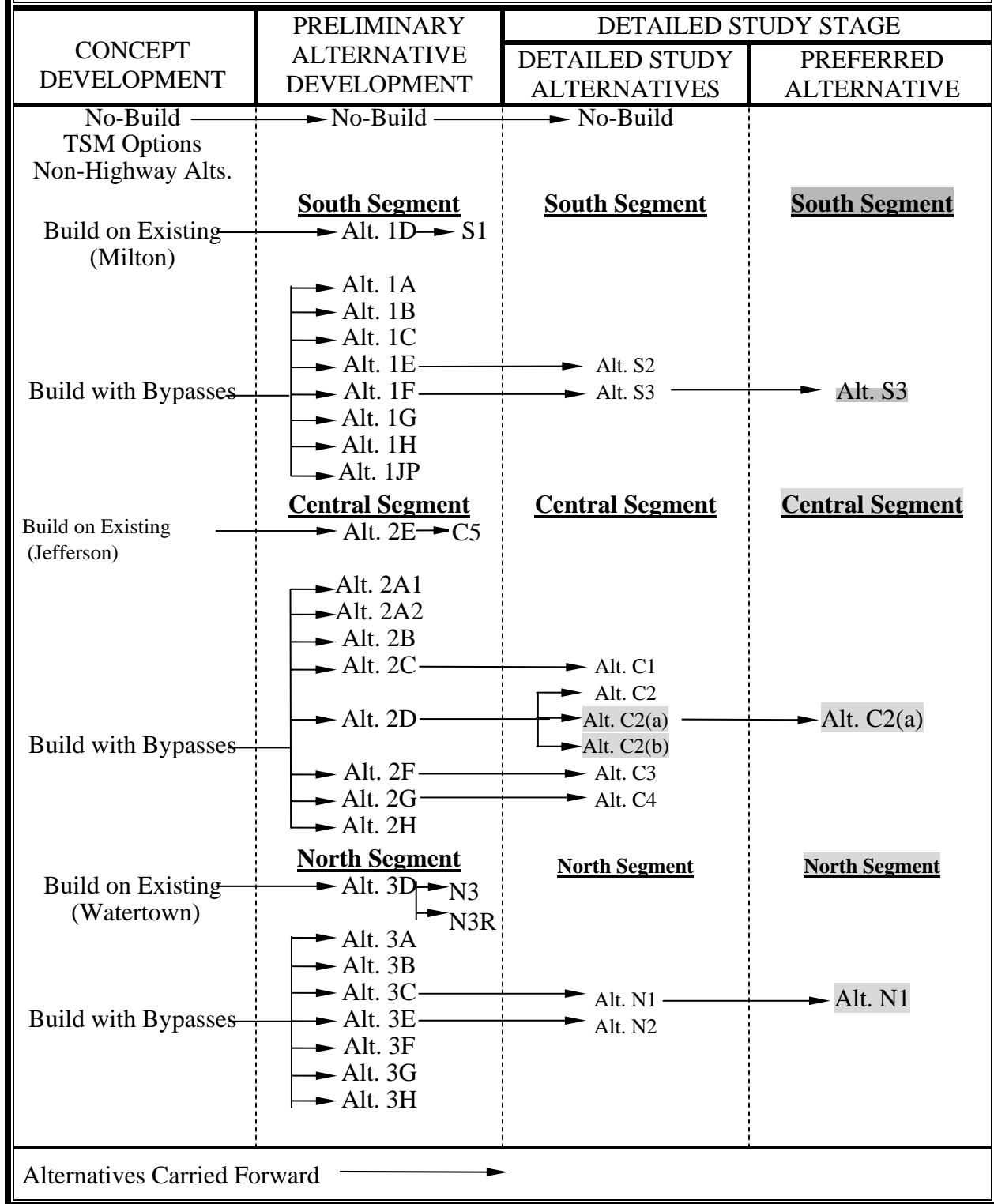


Figure S.4 Project Study Segments

TABLE S.4.1
ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS SCHEMATIC



S.4.2 Alternatives Considered

Project development included consideration of the following improvement concepts:

S.4.2.1 No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, improvements to the STH 26 corridor would primarily consist of maintenance activities or spot improvements that attempt to maintain current service levels. Generally, the rural section of roadways, including the Ft. Atkinson bypass, would remain a two-lane rural roadway with no change in access. The exception to this is the rural section between Janesville and Milton, which was reconstructed as a four-lane divided rural highway having expressway access standards in 1999. Urban sections of roadway in Milton, Jefferson, and Watertown (north of STH 19) would remain as two-lane urban roadways with some parking and turn lanes. The urban section of Johnson Creek between CTH Y and Baneck Lane was reconstructed as a four-lane divided roadway in 2001-2002, and the urban section of Watertown south of STH 19 was reconstructed as a four-lane urban roadway in 2003. There would be minimal change in access in any of the urban communities.

Under the No-Build Alternative, the existing roadways in the urban communities would become more congested than today. This congestion would cause hardship to local mobility, limiting the public's access to businesses, schools, and other parts of the community. As development occurs in and around the corridor, an unimproved two-lane roadway in Milton and Jefferson and the existing 4-lane roadway in Watertown would not be able to accommodate growing traffic. Additionally, the existing 4-lane expressway access roadway between Janesville and Milton will experience traffic slowdowns and will have a greater potential for crashes. STH 26 would not function effectively as a regional highway and regional traffic would increasingly use less congested local and county roads. The utility of STH 26 for transporting goods to regional, statewide, and national destinations would decline. The No-Build Alternative, while having fewer environmental impacts such as land acquisition and relocations, would not be consistent with the *Corridors 2020* plan and its intended highway function as a route of national, state, regional and local importance.

In summary, the No-Build Alternative would not meet the purpose and need requirements of this project. It was carried forward as a detailed study alternative to serve as a baseline for comparison of Build Alternatives and for evaluation of their environmental impacts.

S.4.2.2 Traffic System Management

Traffic system management measures are generally applicable only in larger urban areas where traffic signal timing, designated use lanes, and other measures can have a substantial effect. Such measures are not reasonable for this predominantly rural project and do not address the purpose and need requirements for the project. For this reason, this alternative was dismissed from further consideration.

S.4.2.3 Non-Highway Alternatives

Mass transit alternatives in the form of bus, light rail, and commuter rail were considered early in the project. Mass transit is typically considered to be an effective transportation solution in larger urbanized areas. The density and size of the population in the communities served along the 48-mile (77-km) STH 26 corridor, and the rural agricultural nature of the surrounding area, make bus or commuter rail service

infeasible. Such alternatives would not meet the purpose and need requirements for this project and therefore were dismissed from further consideration.

Passenger heavy rail and inter city buses were also considered. Passenger heavy rail service involves trains at travel speeds similar to Amtrak with limited stops. Service between Janesville and Chicago currently exists. Wisconsin, along with a consortium of other Midwest states and the federal government is planning a network of high-speed passenger rail lines extending from a Chicago hub. Potential station sites include Madison, Watertown, and Milwaukee. Several daily inter city buses provide service between Madison and Chicago along IH 90 with scheduled stops in Janesville, and between Madison and Milwaukee along IH 94.

Passenger rail and inter city buses are not practical for serving existing and future traffic demand within the STH 26 corridor. Such alternatives would not meet the purpose and need requirements for this project and therefore were dismissed from further consideration. STH 26 does function, however, as the major connector to these services for communities along the corridor. A park-and-ride lot was constructed in 2001-2002 for STH 26 and IH 94 at Johnson Creek, with provisions being made to accommodate inter city bus service. Planning for additional park-and-ride facilities in the Janesville area is also being considered under a separate study.

Development of a corridor to handle freight rail was considered early in the project. Freight rail service currently exists between Clyman Junction and Jefferson as part of the Union Pacific Railroad rail network. The rail line from Ft. Atkinson to Janesville was abandoned and a good portion of the corridor south of Jefferson has been developed into a recreational trail. The rail line from Fond du Lac to Clyman Junction has also been abandoned and now serves as a trail. There are no federal or state programs to finance the construction of new freight rail lines. Multiple rail track corridors exist between the industrial Fox River Valley area, through the Milwaukee area, and into the Chicago area where numerous service connections can be made with major east-west nationwide rail lines. It is unlikely that a new rail line along STH 26 could duplicate the numerous service line connections to the east-west rail lines that currently exist, and thus the service would not be competitive with the existing services. The existing rail lines from the Fox River Valley area to the Milwaukee and Chicago areas can handle additional rail freight capacity. The STH 26 corridor serves the needs of truck freight that typically has more dispersed destinations than rail freight, and hence the need exists for an efficient and effective highway system. This alternative was therefore dismissed from further consideration.

S.4.2.4 Preliminary Build Alternatives

Several alternative bypasses for Milton, Jefferson, and Watertown were considered as well as through-town urban alternatives. All of the preliminary alternatives were based on the concept of providing a four-lane divided facility. Freeway access control standards (no access except at interchanges) would be implemented along the bypass portions of the route. Expressway standards, permitting at-grade intersections and private entrances at controlled spacing, would be applied to the rural segments located along the existing alignment. Through-town alternatives were studied in more detail than other preliminary alternatives that were dismissed in order to more thoroughly understand and weigh the associated impacts and to provide a longer time for the public to review and comment on the alternatives.

Nine preliminary alternatives were developed for the South Segment. Included were three bypass corridors located west of the city, four bypass corridors located east of the city, and two corridors that passed through Milton, one along existing STH 26 and one along John Paul Road. These preliminary alternatives are discussed in detail in Section 2.2.2. After preliminary analysis and public and agency

comment, two alternatives located east of the City of Milton were carried forward for further study, and the other alternatives were dropped from further consideration.

Nine preliminary alternatives were developed for the Central Segment. Included were five bypass corridors located west of the city, three bypass corridors located east of the city, and one corridor that passed through Jefferson along existing STH 26. These preliminary alternatives are discussed in detail in Section 2.2.3. After preliminary analysis and public and agency comment, two alternatives located west and two alternatives located east of the City of Jefferson were carried forward for further study, and the other alternatives were dropped from further consideration.

Eight preliminary alternatives were developed for the North Segment. Included were three bypass corridors located west of the city, four bypass corridors located east of the city, and two corridors that passed through Watertown, one along existing STH 26 and one along an existing railroad corridor. These preliminary alternatives are discussed in detail in Section 2.2.4. After preliminary analysis and public and agency comment, one alternative located west and one alternative located east of the City of Watertown were carried forward for further study, and the other alternatives were dropped from further consideration.

S.4.3 Detailed Study Alternatives

S.4.3.1 No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative was evaluated in detail as required by 40 CFR 1502.14 of the CEQ regulations. It was carried forward as a detailed study alternative to serve as a baseline for comparison of Build Alternatives and for evaluation of their environmental impacts. As discussed in Sections S.4.2.1 and 2.3.1, the No-Build Alternative would not meet the purpose and need requirements of this project.

S.4.3.2 Build Alternatives

Each of the eight detailed study improvement alternatives evaluated in this EIS consists of upgrading the two-lane roadway to a four-lane divided rural highway. The general concept is to utilize the existing highway corridor to the extent practical, with bypasses of communities where necessary to maintain constant highway speed and to avoid excessive relocations and impacts to historic sites. Freeway access control standards (no access except at interchanges) would be implemented along the bypass portions of the route. Expressway standards, permitting at-grade intersections and private entrances at controlled spacing, would be applied to the rural segments located along the existing alignment.

The location of the rural highway alignment will shift from one side of the existing roadway to the other, and the location of the alignment in bypass areas is generally within urban service areas planned for urban growth within twenty years. These alignment characteristics were selected as the best means to avoid or minimize adverse natural resources impacts, as well as property severances, relocations, and conversion of other lands for highway purposes.

WisDOT's guidelines indicate that capacity improvements for a two-lane rural arterial roadway should be considered when the Average Daily Traffic (ADT) reaches 8,700 vehicles. Currently, 90 percent of the rural segments within the 48-mile (77-km) study corridor have traffic volumes exceeding 8,700 ADT. By 2028, almost all rural segments are projected to exceed the 8,700 ADT threshold by two to four times. The eight improvement alternatives carried forward for detailed study will provide the needed capacity and level of service for the corridor's current and projected traffic volumes.

The improvement alternatives will reduce the number of crashes along STH 26, with the most substantial reduction of crashes being in the urban sections. Both expressway and freeway access control standards will reduce the number of traffic conflicts and potential for crashes. The separation of traffic from two to four lanes will reduce intersection and driveway entrance related crashes, as well as head on, rear end, and angle crashes and other variable speed crashes.

A four-lane rural divided roadway with expressway and freeway access control standards for the improvement alternatives will permit relatively unimpeded traffic flow of 55-65 mph (89-105 km/h) along the majority of the STH 26 corridor. The exceptions would be the areas of STH 26 that approach IH 90 at Janesville and IH 94 at Johnson Creek, where it is reasonable to expect a slow down in traffic operations.

The improvement alternatives provide a functionally continuous facility throughout the entire project length. They also are consistent with the *Corridors 2020* plan, which designates STH 26 as a Connector Route.

In summary, the eight improvement alternatives will meet the purpose and need requirements of this project while minimizing impacts to the natural and human environment. Each will address capacity and level of service, problems associated with safety, and will provide system continuity and roadway function consistent with a route of national, state, regional and local importance.

The eight improvement alternatives are discussed in detail in Section 2.3. The following summarizes each of the improvement alternatives in terms of the corridor's three study segments.

S.4.3.2.1 South Segment

Alternative S2 (Figure 2.3.2.1) includes a relocated alignment crossing through the City of Milton that was developed to avoid impacts to several historic properties, two parks, and a school associated with a through-town corridor.

Alternative S3 (Figure 2.3.2.1) includes a near east Milton bypass alignment that was developed to direct STH 26 along a narrow corridor between the city and the Storrs Lake Wildlife Area.

Based on comments on the DEIS from review agencies, Alternatives S2 and S3 were modified from north of Milton to CTH N. In order to reduce impacts to the Otter Creek Springs natural area, the proposed interchange at CTH N was moved approximately 2,000 feet (610 meters) to the east of existing STH 26. This resulted in shifting the alignment off the existing alignment from north of Milton to CTH N (Figure 2.3.2.1a).

S.4.3.2.2 Central Segment

Alternative C1 (Figure 2.3.2.2) includes a far west Jefferson bypass corridor.

Alternative C2 (Figure 2.3.2.2) includes a near west Jefferson bypass corridor that utilizes more of the existing STH 26 corridor alignment.

Alternative C2(a) Two modifications of Alternative C2 were studied which alters the location of the crossing of USH 18 and the Crawfish River. The modifications are limited to the bypass alignment west of the City of Jefferson approximately one mile south and north of USH 18. Beyond these limits, both

modifications would follow the same alignment as Alternative C2. The first modification, referred to as C2(a), includes an alignment that crosses USH 18 approximately 1,000 feet (305 m) east of Alternative C2 and approximately 1,100 feet (335 m) west of the Crawfish River. See [Exhibit 6, Sheet 4](#) for details of the modification.

Alternative C2(b) The second modification, referred to as C2(b), includes an alignment that crosses USH 18 approximately 2,400 feet (730 m) east of Alternative C2 and approximately 400 feet (120 m) east of the Crawfish River. See [Exhibit 6, Sheet 4](#) for details of the modification.

Alternative C3 ([Figure 2.3.2.2](#)) includes a near east Jefferson bypass corridor

Alternative C4 ([Figure 2.3.2.2](#)) includes a far east Jefferson bypass corridor.

S.4.3.2.3 North Segment

Alternative N1 ([Figure 2.3.2.3](#)) includes a near west Watertown bypass corridor.

Alternative N2 ([Figure 2.3.2.3](#)) includes a near east Watertown bypass corridor that extends along the existing STH 16-bypass corridor in the northeast portion of the city.

S.4.4 Preferred Alternative

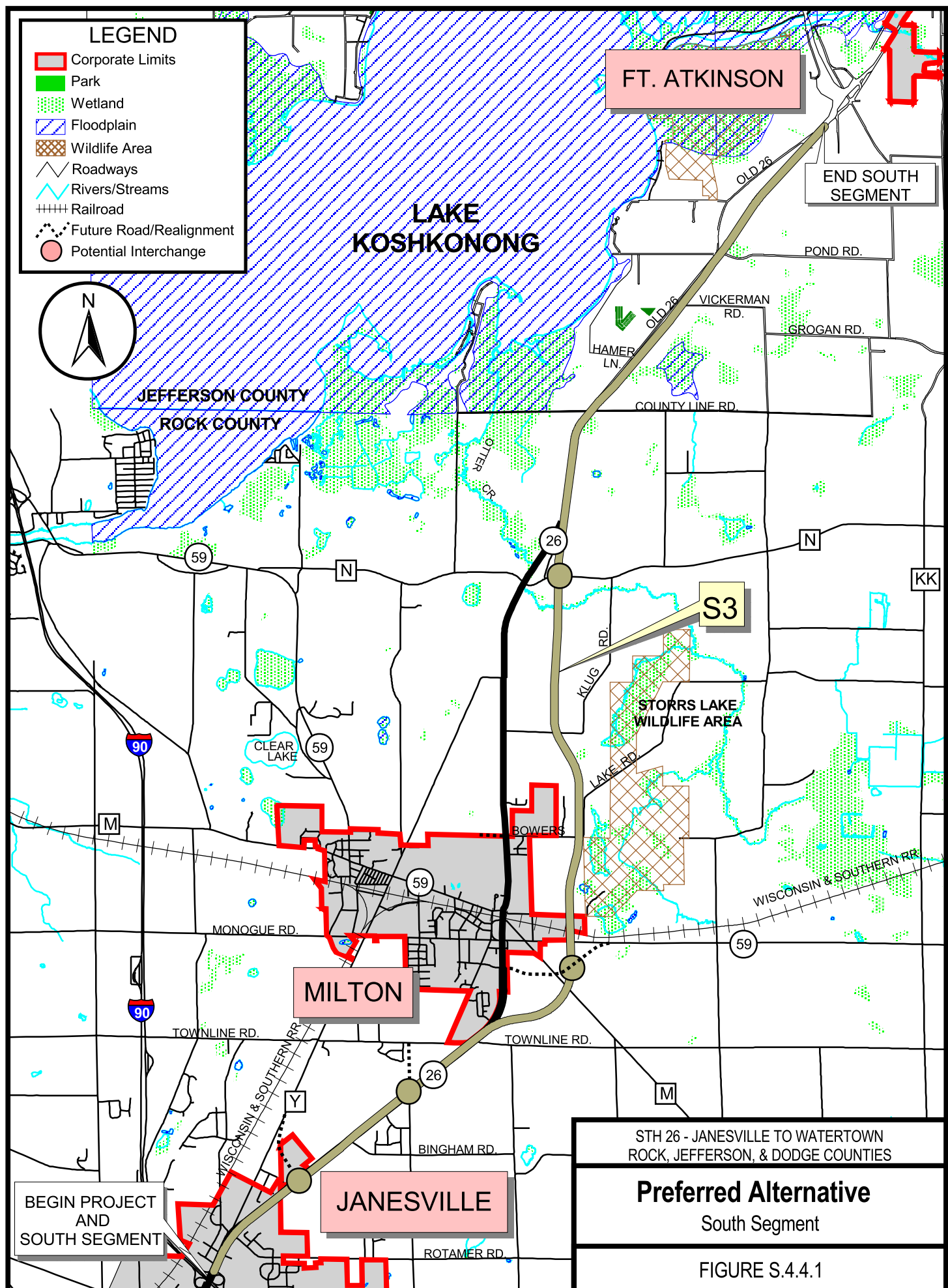
After evaluating engineering and environmental factors for corridor alternatives, and careful consideration of comments from various agencies, affected communities and property owners, the following preferred alternatives for the three project segments are recommended. [Figures S.4.4.1, S.4.4.2, and S.4.4.3](#), and [Exhibit 8](#), show the location of the Preferred Alternative for the South, Central, and North Segments of the project.

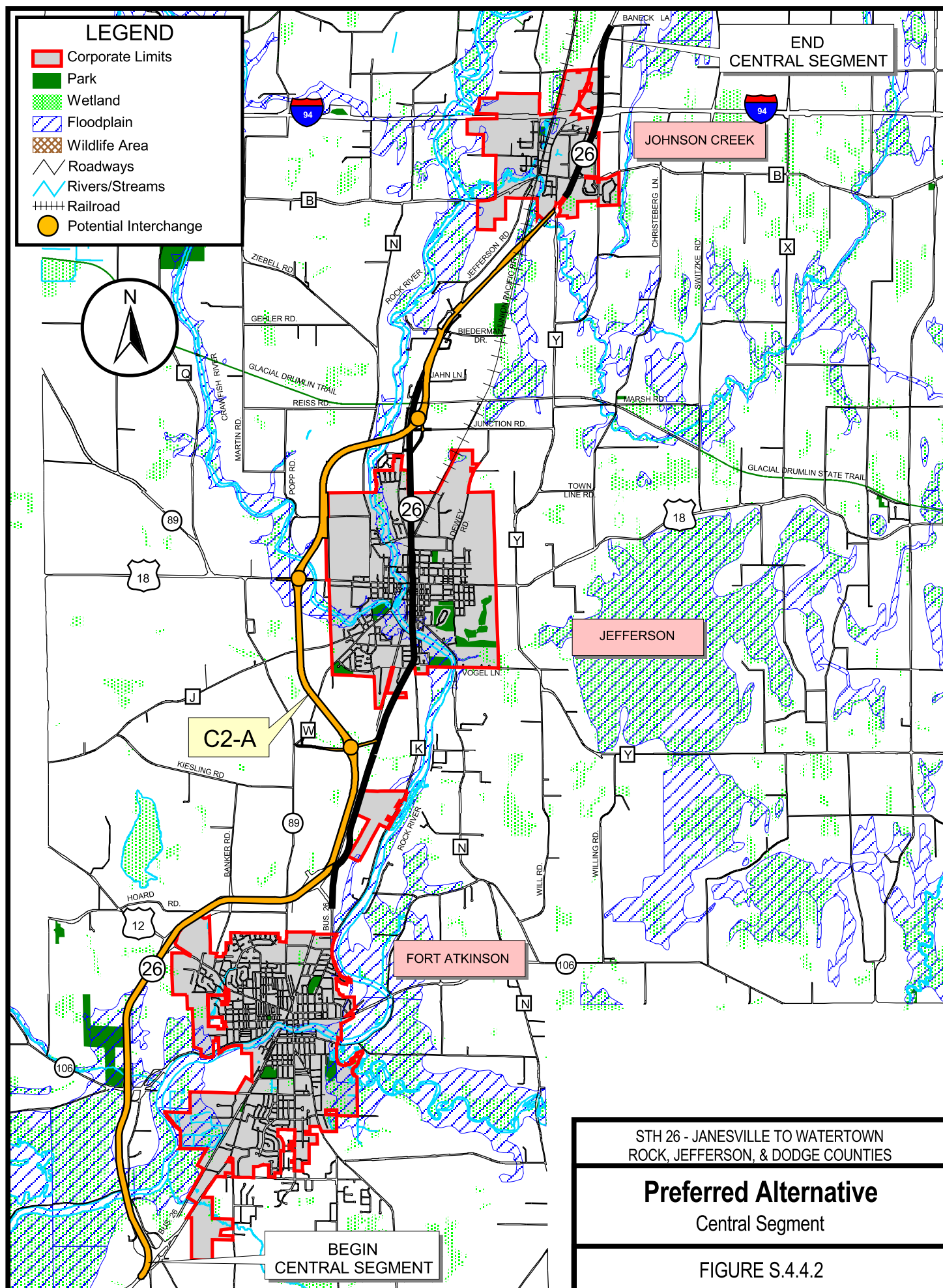
S.4.4.1 South Segment

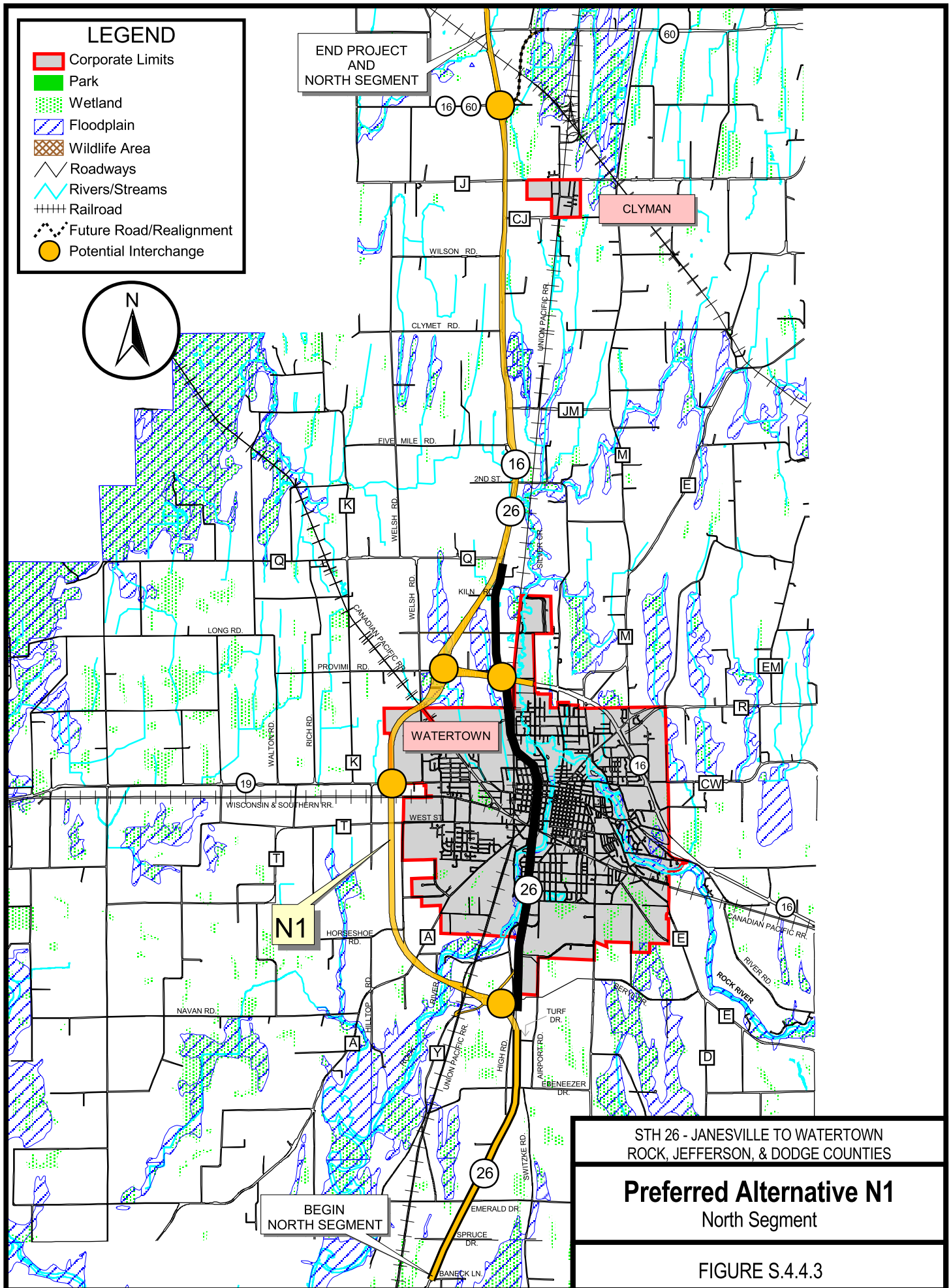
The Preferred Alternative for the South Segment is identified as Alternative S3, which includes an east bypass of the City of Milton. The Preferred Alternative uses the existing four-lane section of STH 26 between CTH Y and Town Line Road south of Milton. This 3.9-mile (6.3-km) section was improved in 1999 from a two-lane rural roadway to a four-lane divided highway having expressway access standards. Additional lanes or capacity improvements between CTH Y and Town Line Road are not part of this project, but access modifications are planned that will preserve the functionality of the existing highway within this segment, and will permit the route to operate safely as traffic volumes increase.

From Town Line Road to CTH N north of Milton, the Preferred Alternative consists of a new four-lane divided highway that is on new alignment east of the City of Milton. North of CTH N, the Preferred Alternative follows the existing alignment of STH 26 to the Fort Atkinson bypass. The existing two-lane roadway in this segment is improved to a four-lane divided highway with the addition of two lanes and a median to the existing highway.

Since the time of the DEIS, several access modifications and improvements to local roads connections to STH 26 have been planned between Janesville and Milton. Access north of CTH Y would be managed and focused to two future full access locations, one at or near McCormick Road and the other at Harmony Town Hall Road. Janesville, Milton, and Town of Harmony agree with these planned access locations.







An access location near McCormick Road is consistent with Janesville's plans. The city has expressed a preference for an at-grade signalized intersection at this location as part of the Preferred Alternative. Given the expectations of growth in residential and commercial uses in this area, WisDOT believes a full interchange will have greater safety and mobility benefits, and will be the best solution in the longer term for access to STH 26. A full interchange near McCormick Road is included in this EIS as part of the Preferred Alternative as a long-term improvement and is shown on [Exhibit 8](#). This decision will be reviewed at the time of design in cooperation with the city of Janesville to confirm that it is still the most appropriate solution, and a reevaluation of associated environmental consequences will be made if needed.

Also long term, it is expected that the existing developed abutting properties along STH 26 south of McCormick Road will not have direct access to the highway. A frontage road design has been included in this EIS for the north side of the highway in this area, recognizing at the time of design another approach may be more suitable depending upon the kind of changes that have or are expected to occur in this area. While construction in this area is not anticipated for several years, WisDOT will work with Janesville on early design in this area so as not to preclude desirable options for the future, and to allow area properties to redevelop in accordance with a long-range plan. A reevaluation of environmental consequences will be made in this area if needed.

Janesville, Milton, and Town of Harmony have developed an agreement among the three communities and passed individual resolutions supporting a full diamond interchange in the vicinity of Harmony Town Hall Road, and supporting the concept that land uses in this area remain non-commercial and exist as a community separation between Janesville and Milton. Copies of the agreement and resolutions are in Appendix B. These agreements minimize possible indirect impacts that would be inconsistent with community goals for the future. WisDOT will work to assist area communities in the development of roadway infrastructure consistent with area land use plans.

Access modifications and adjustments made to Alternative S3, Janesville to Fort Atkinson, since the time of the DEIS include the following:

- The full access at-grade intersection connection of County Road Y with STH 26 near IH 90 is being closed for safety reasons, and only right-in and right-out will be allowed at this location. County Road Y will be relocated to a new connection with STH 26 near McCormick Drive. Woodcrest Drive will have only right-in and right-out access to STH 26. A new overpass at a future Wright Road extension by the City of Janesville is planned at STH 26. Bingham Road will be closed at STH 26 with access planned at a new interchange at Harmony Town Hall Road. An extension of Harmony Town Hall Road 0.5 mi (0.8 km) north from the new interchange to Town Line Road is planned. The existing at-grade connections of Town Line Road at STH 26 will be closed and the east and west segments of Town Line Road will be connected with an overpass bridge. An extension of Henke Road from Town Line Road northerly to existing STH 26 and St. Mary's Road is planned. Finally, County Road M in the area of proposed STH 26 is being closed and relocated between Town Line Road and proposed STH 59.
- North of Milton, a proposed interchange at Klug Road is being eliminated due to insufficient traffic volumes. At Klug Road, cul-de-sacs will be constructed on the east and west sides of proposed STH 26, and a new frontage road connecting Klug Road with Bower's Lake Road will be constructed for local access.

- The alignment north of Milton to CTH N is modified to reduce impacts to the Otter Creek Springs natural area. The proposed interchange at CTH N has moved approximately 2,000 feet (610 meters) to the east of existing STH 26.
- South of Ft. Atkinson, changes in the Pond Road/Koshkonong Lake intersections are planned. Pond Road will be connected to Koshkonong Lake Road with an overpass bridge. Two low speed “jug handle” ramps will be constructed at this location to allow right-in and right-out only on STH 26.

Alternative S3 as modified since the publication of the DEIS is preferred as it provides transportation and other benefits that Alternative S2 does not provide. These benefits are discussed in detail in section 2.4.1.1.

S.4.4.2 Central Segment

The Preferred Alternative for the Central Segment is identified as Alternative C2(a), which includes a near west bypass of the City of Jefferson. From the south limits of the Central Segment, the Preferred Alternative follows the alignment of the Fort Atkinson bypass with the addition of two lanes and a median within the existing right-of-way. From Business 26 at the north end of the Fort Atkinson bypass to Jahn Lane north of Jefferson, the Preferred Alternative consists of a new four-lane divided highway that is on new alignment west of Jefferson. North of Jahn Lane, the Preferred Alternative follows the existing highway until it matches the 2001-2002 four-lane improvements at Johnson Creek. The existing two lane rural roadway in this segment is improved to a four-lane divided highway with the addition of two lanes and a median to the existing highway.

It was identified in the Draft EIS and shown at the public hearing that if Alternative C2(a) was selected as a Preferred Alternative, it could incorporate the Alternative C1 alignment between Business 26 and CTH W to maintain a local road connection between Ft. Atkinson and Jefferson. The Preferred Alternative C2(a) alignment as presented here incorporates this change.

Since publication of the DEIS, Alternative C2(a) has been modified to include a structure crossing of I-94 about 1,200 feet (366 m) east of existing STH 26. The bridge crossing over I-94 would connect existing Waldmann Lane on the north with existing Spring Lane on the south. The structure would be within existing right of way and would have no additional environmental impacts. The addition of this structure connects and completes a local roadway system that allows local traffic to have mobility between the north and south sides of I-94 without having to use the STH 26/I-94 interchange. The continuity of the local road system will relieve traffic through the interchange area, and will preserve the long-term functionality of the STH 26 corridor.

Alternative C2(a) as modified since the publication of the DEIS is preferred based on comments and support from review agencies and because it provides transportation and other benefits that the other Central Segment alternatives do not provide. These benefits and the details of the agency positions are discussed in detail in Section 2.4.1.2.

S.4.4.3 North Segment

The Preferred Alternative for the North Segment is identified as Alternative N1, which includes a near west bypass of the City of Watertown. From the south limits of the North Segment to Turf Drive, and from CTH Q to the north project terminus at STH 60-East, the Preferred Alternative follows the existing alignment of STH 26 with the addition of two lanes and a median to the existing highway. Between Turf

Drive and CTH Q, the Preferred Alternative consists of a new four-lane divided highway that is on new alignment west of the City of Watertown.

Since the publication of the DEIS, Alternative N1 has been modified as follows:

- Just south of Watertown, a new local road connecting Horseshoe Road to County A and County Y is planned based on input from local officials to improve local traffic circulation. Business 26 and High Road, local roadways leading from the south interchange area into the City of Watertown, are also being adjusted slightly to provide safe and improved intersection connections.
- The second change reduces the size of the north interchange for Watertown. A diamond interchange is now proposed at the current intersection of STH 16 and Church Street (existing STH 26), allowing local access to take advantage of existing Church Street and eliminating the need for a new local roadway into Watertown. A second interchange is also proposed west of Church Street that will only handle traffic movement between STH 16 and STH 26. This new layout saves about 100 ac (40 ha) of farmland, and no longer requires the relocation of four businesses along Church Street.
- The third change is north of Watertown in the area between Second Street and County Road JM. STH 26 is being adjusted slightly to the east into the space occupied by the now vacant Kolb-Lena cheese factory building. This adjustment allows the existing highway between Five-Mile Road and County JM to remain in place as a frontage road. This change facilitates the planned expansion of an existing lumberyard business. It is also proposed to extend this frontage road south to Second Street. At-grade intersections with STH 26 would be at Second Street and County JM.

A near west alternative is preferred as it best provides a balance between having a transportation system consistent with state, regional and local needs with the safety, environmental, economic and social impacts of the proposed improvement. It also provides the necessary capacity and an adequate level of service for current and projected traffic volumes including trucks.

Alternative N1 as modified since the publication of the DEIS, is preferred as it provides transportation and other benefits that the near east Alternative N2 does not provide. These benefits are discussed in detail in Section 2.4.1.3.

S.5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The primary environmental impacts associated with all of the build alternatives include agricultural land acquisition and severances, wetland impacts, residential and business relocations, floodplain impacts, and potential effects on archaeological resources. “Only Practicable Alternative Finding, Protection of Wetlands” and “Only Practicable Alternative Finding, Floodplains” are presented in Sections V and VI respectively. [Table S.5](#) summarizes the impacts for the No-Build Alternative and the Detailed Study Build alternatives. Impacts for the Preferred Alternatives are presented in [Table S.5.1](#) and [Table 2.4](#).

S.6 OTHER ACTIVITIES REQUIRED

This document complies with U.S. Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) policies to determine whether a proposed project will have induced socioeconomic impacts or any other adverse impacts on minority or low income populations. It meets the requirements of Executive

Order on Environmental Justice 12898, “Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations.” Neither minority nor low income populations would receive disproportionately high and adverse impacts as a result of any of the alternatives selected for detailed study.

Stream and wetland involvement associated with selection of the Preferred Alternative is subject to individual permits under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

Relocation Assistance Plans for displaced residences and businesses require approval by the Wisconsin Department of Industry, Labor, and Human Relations per Section 32.25, Wisconsin Statutes.

The bypass alternatives will require a change in the official location of STH 26 per Section 84, Wisconsin Statutes. After construction of proposed STH 26, the unused portions of existing STH 26 will be jurisdictionally transferred to the appropriate local unit of government. At that time, the transferred portions of existing STH 26 will be resurfaced from curb to curb or shoulder to shoulder with minimal shoulder grading. No new right of way will be acquired and no additional environmental impacts are anticipated. Therefore, the jurisdictionally transferred portions of existing STH 26 are covered under this environmental document. If it is determined that any of the work required to complete these transfers will need to occur outside of the existing right of way, a separate environmental document will be required before such work can begin. Estimates of the costs associated with these transfers are provided in Table 2.4.

S.7 REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

The planning, agency coordination, public involvement, and impact evaluation for the project have been conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, the Wisconsin Environmental Policy Act, the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, Executive Orders regarding wetland and floodplain protection, the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, the Farmland Protection Policy Act, the Executive Order on Environmental Justice 12898, and other state and federal laws, policies, and procedures for environmental impact analysis and preparation of environmental documents.

S.8 OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCY ACTIONS

Other significant actions proposed by government agencies in the same geographic area as the proposed project include the following projects.

Project	Work Description	Project Status
STH 26 – Main Street to Railroad	Reconstruct	Complete in 2004
Hwy 12 – Cambridge to Ft. Atkinson	Reconstruct existing two-lane roadway	Complete in 2005
* Hwy 12 – Ft. Atkinson to Whitewater Corridor Study	Corridor study	Began study 2001
US Hwy 12 Whitewater Bypass	Construct new bypass around Whitewater	Complete in 2005
USH 18 – Racine Street in Jefferson	Reconstruct	Begin construction 2007
STH 106 – Ft. Atkinson to CTH CI	Reconstruct existing two-lane roadway	Begin construction 2007
STH 16 – Oconomowoc Bypass	Construct new bypass around Oconomowoc	Complete in 2006
STH 60 – Columbus to STH 26	Reconstruct existing two-lane roadway	Begin construction 2006
I-39/90 – Illinois State Line to Madison	Add third lane and interchange improvements	Began study 2002

* Coordination with the US Hwy 12 project has been ongoing throughout the STH 26 corridor study. The STH 26 Preferred Alternative does not preclude any of the options being studied as part of the US Hwy 12 project.

TABLE S.5
ENVIRONMENTAL MATRIX FOR DETAILED STUDY ALTERNATIVES
STH 26 Transportation Improvements - Janesville to Watertown

Environmental Issue	Unit of Measure	South Segment				Central Segment						North Segment			
		No Build	S2	S3		No Build	C1	C2	C2(a)	C2(b)	C3	C4	No Build	N1	N2
Project Length	Mi (Km)	13.3 (21.4)	14.3 (23.0)	14.1 (22.7)		17.6 (28.3)	19.4 (31.2)	18.8 (30.3)	18.7 (30.1)	18.6 (29.9)	18.7 (30.1)	18.3 (29.5)	17.8 (28.6)	18.9 (30.4)	20.9 (33.6)
Cost \$															
Construction	Million \$	\$0	\$39	\$38		\$0	\$60	\$59	\$59	\$60	\$56	\$57	\$0	\$67	\$72
Real Estate	Million \$	\$0	\$4	\$4		\$0	\$6	\$6	\$6	\$6	\$6	\$6	\$0	\$7	\$7
Total	Million \$	\$0	\$43	\$42		\$0	\$66	\$65	\$65	\$66	\$62	\$63	\$0	\$74	\$79
Land Conversions															
Total Land Converted to R/W	Acres (Hectares)	0 (0)	342 (138)	351 (142)		0 (0)	483 (195)	423 (171)	419 (170)	414 (168)	414 (168)	471 (191)	0 (0)	825 (334)	565 (229)
Wetland Area Converted to R/W	Acres (Hectares)	0 (0)	6 (3)	7 (3)		0 (0)	24 (10)	20 (8)	16 (7)	19 (8)	31 (13)	55 (22)	0 (0)	23 (9)	21 (9)
Upland Woodland Area Converted to R/W	Acres (Hectares)	0 (0)	2 (1)	2 (1)		0 (0)	12 (5)	9 (4)	8 (3)	9 (4)	2 (1)	10 (4)	0 (0)	7 (3)	16 (7)
Other Area Converted to R/W	Acres (Hectares)	0 (0)	27 (11)	26 (11)		0 (0)	9 (4)	34 (14)	41 (17)	40 (16)	43 (17)	32 (13)	0 (0)	28 (11)	112 (45)
Real Estate															
Total Area from Farm Operations Required	Acres (Hectares)	0 (0)	307 (124)	316 (128)		0 (0)	438 (177)	360 (146)	354 (147)	346 (140)	338 (137)	374 (151)	0 (0)	767 (310)	416 (168)
AIS Required?	Yes/No	No	Yes	Yes		No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Farm Land Rating	Score	N/A	151	153		N/A	161	164	*	*	154	152	N/A	158	151
Total Buildings Required	Number	0	--	--		0	--	--	--	--	--	--	0	--	--
Housing Units Required	Number	0	47	11		0	9	5	5	10	13	6	0	19	24
Commercial Units Required	Number	0	2	2		0	2	3	4	5	1	0	0	7	6
Other Buildings or Structures Required	Number (Type)	0	--	--		0	--	--	--	--	--	--	0	--	--
N/A		N/A				N/A							N/A		
Environmental Issues															
Flood Plain	Yes/No	No	No	No		No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Stream Crossings	Number	0	1	1		0	2	2	2	2	1	2	0	1	1
Endangered Species	Yes/No	No	No	No		No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Historic Properties	Number	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1
Archaeological Sites	Number	0	5	5		0	7	4	*	*	5	5	0	6	7
106 MOA Required?	Yes/No	No	No	No		No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
4(f) Evaluation Required?	Yes/No	No	No	No		No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Env. Justice at Issue?	Yes/No	No	No	No		No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Air Quality Permit?	Yes/No	No	No	No		No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Design Year Noise Sensitive Receptors															
No Impact	Number	105	153	153		144	147	161	*	*	175	96	50	88	147
Impacted	Number	101	58	66		245	179	178	*	*	178	161	300	280	213
Exceed dBA Levels	Number	101	43	50		245	142	137	*	*	141	139	300	172	172
Contaminated Sites	Number	0	1	1		0	0	0	*	*	0	0	0	2	2

* Modifications C2(a) and C2(b) are anticipated to have a similar impact rating as Alternative C2.

TABLE S.5.1
ENVIRONMENTAL MATRIX FOR PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE
STH 26 Transportation Improvements - Janesville to Watertown

Environmental Issue	Unit of Measure	South Segment		Central Segment		North Segment		Project Total	
		No Build	S3	No Build	C2(a)	No Build	N1	No Build	Build
Project Length	Mi (Km)	13.3 (21.4)	13.5 (21.7)	17.6 (28.3)	18.3 (29.5)	17.8 (28.6)	18.6 (30.0)	48.7 (78.3)	50.4 (81.2)
Cost \$									
Construction	Million \$	\$0	\$48	\$0	\$64	\$0	\$80	\$0	\$192
Real Estate	Million \$	\$0	\$16	\$0	\$14	\$0	\$32	\$0	\$62
Total	Million \$	\$0	\$64	\$0	\$78	\$0	\$112	\$0	\$254
Land Conversions									
Total Land Converted to R/W	Acres (Hectares)	0 (0)	477 (193)	0 (0)	419 (170)	0 (0)	855 (346)	0 (0)	1,751 (709)
Wetland Area Converted to R/W	Acres (Hectares)	0 (0)	6.1 (2.5)	0 (0)	15.2 (6.2)	0 (0)	28.8 (11.7)	0 (0)	50.1 (20.3)
Upland Woodland Area Converted to R/W	Acres (Hectares)	0 (0)	13 (5)	0 (0)	7 (3)	0 (0)	9 (4)	0 (0)	29 (12)
Other Area Converted to R/W	Acres (Hectares)	0 (0)	130 (53)	0 (0)	65 (26)	0 (0)	125 (51)	0 (0)	320 (130)
Real Estate									
Total Area from Farm Operations Required	Acres (Hectares)	0 (0)	328 (133)	0 (0)	332 (134)	0 (0)	692 (280)	0 (0)	1,352 (547)
AIS Required?	Yes/No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Farmland Rating	Score	N/A	153	N/A	164	N/A	158	N/A	158 (ave)
Housing Units Required	Number	0	15	0	4	0	19	0	38
Commercial Units Required	Number	0	4	0	2	0	1	0	7
Environmental Issues									
Flood Plain	Yes/No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Stream Crossings	Number	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	4
Endangered Species	Yes/No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Historic Properties	Number	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Archaeological Sites	Number	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	4
106 MOA Required?	Yes/No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
4(f) Evaluation Required?	Yes/No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Env. Justice at Issue?	Yes/No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Air Quality Permit?	Yes/No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Design Year Noise Sensitive Receptors									
No Impact	Number	105	77	144	158	50	88	299	323
Impacted	Number	101	59	245	175	300	262	646	496
Exceed dBA Levels	Number	101	48	245	92	300	181	646	321
Contaminated Sites	Number	0	3	0	3	0	6	0	12

S.9 ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS

- A sidewalk will be provided along one side of Storrs Lake Road at the structure crossing of STH 26 to accommodate pedestrian usage of a future National Park Service (NPS) Ice Age Trail.
- WisDOT will pursue acquisition of land between proposed STH 26 and the Storr's Lake Wildlife Area, south of Bower's Lake Road and north of Storrs Lake Road, to buffer the wildlife area.
 - A vegetated berm will be constructed in the buffer zone to minimize noise impacts to users of the wildlife area while not blocking wildlife movement.
 - The buffer zone will remain in public ownership and will be maintained by the responsible agency.
- Storm water runoff into Storr's Lake and Bower's Lake will be minimized. WisDOT will commit to implementing the following EPA recommendations:
 - The use of a two-cell sedimentation basin system designed to filter larger and finer particles;
 - The use of native vegetation in the sedimentation system; and,
 - Other design considerations that would reduce the possibility of roadway contaminants affecting these water bodies (e.g., man-made berms).
- Archaeological related stipulations and other terms and conditions as outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement dated May 27, 2005, and attached as Appendix F, will be implemented.
- WisDOT will ensure that archaeological surveys are conducted for borrow, batch plants, waste sites, and staging areas to be used for this project. If archaeological material is encountered, 36 CFR 800 will be followed or another area will be obtained for borrow, batch plants, waste sites, and staging areas. If human bone is discovered, work will stop immediately and the Burial Sites Preservation Office, the District Environmental Coordinator, and WisDOT BEES will be notified immediately and will supply guidance on when work can proceed in the area.
- The WisDOT will ensure that all construction contracts contain language describing potential delays to the contractor, in the event of an archaeological discovery during construction. This will include language to stop construction in the area of the discovery to permit implementation of mitigation measures.
- The WisDOT will ensure that public interpretation, not to exceed \$25,000, of the historic properties associated with the STH 26 project is developed by a committee comprised of FHWA, WisDOT, SHPO, consulting Native American tribes, an archaeologist, an historian, and a representative of interested parties. The method for the public interpretation will be selected within six months after execution of the MOA. The public interpretation will be completed within one year after the method is selected.
- Archaeological survey will be completed on non-surveyed portions of the Preferred Alternative in which access permission was denied by landowners. Survey will be conducted after WisDOT acquires the properties.

- Consideration will be given during design for lengthening the bridge at the Rock River crossing south of Watertown to minimize impact to the Lee Rickerman archaeological site, and to provide a potential bikeway and wildlife movement corridor.
- A detailed wetland mitigation plan will be designed in accordance with WDNR, USCOE, USFWS, and USEPA guidance.
- The Jefferson Railroad Prairie, located between existing STH 26 and the Union Pacific Railroad tracks north of Ft. Atkinson, will be avoided. WisDOT will involve WDNR in long-range management plans for the railroad prairie.
- WisDOT will give consideration to acquiring development rights or protective easements as allowed under the ¼ mile rule for environmentally sensitive areas including the Crawfish River floodplain and the Jefferson Railroad Prairie.
- Bridge structures will be used at non-intermittent stream crossings where it is determined in consultation with WDNR that use of a culvert would adversely impact sensitive aquatic habitat.